



Dementia Friendly Community Joining the National Network

Dementia Friendly America (DFA) communities are influencers and catalysts for change that foster capability to support people with dementia and their care partners in local communities across the nation. The following factors indicate that your community is ready for and committed to this undertaking. Joining the DFA network means you are engaged in a process to become more dementia-friendly. DFA does not certify communities as dementia-friendly. Communities interested in being a member of the Dementia Friendly America network pledge that their efforts will include the following factors.

Readiness and Recognition Criteria

- **Connecting Across Sectors.** DFA communities convene a cross-sector team across three or more community sectors to advance dementia friendliness. A cross-sector team includes at a minimum, government, clinical, community-based organizations and people living in community with dementia and their care partners. Ideally, several community sectors are represented on the cross-sector team.¹
- **Inclusion and Leadership of People Living with Dementia.** People living with dementia and their caregivers are key to leading and shaping dementia friendly communities. It is imperative that people living with dementia shape a dementia friendly community effort.
- **Adoption and Communication of Dementia Friendly Practices and Change Goals.** DFA communities foster sector-specific dementia friendly practices across their communities. The DFA toolkit guides communities through a step-by-step process that fosters adoption of dementia friendly practices in all parts of community. Communities may follow the step by step process or do sector-based outreach and training. Please indicate how your community plans to engage in dementia friendly work.
- **Champion Organization and Coordination Capacity.** Many DFA communities benefit from having an organization that is willing to champion, coordinate and, if needed, serve as a fiscal sponsor. The champion organization may help recruit and partner with a senior leader of local government in the effort (e.g. mayor; city council; other elected officials).
- **Progress Tracking and Sharing.** Communities will report progress by providing a current program description, upon request, and by completing periodic surveys.

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¹ Sectors of community include are listed on the DFA website and include banks/financial services, community members, legal and advanced planning, local government (including transportation, housing, first response, public spaces), health care, hospitals, libraries, faith communities, businesses, community-based services, and residential and specialty care.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

<https://dementiafriendsusa.org/what-dementia-friendly-community>

- Broad awareness and recognition of the signs of dementia and how to communicate with people with dementia.
- People with dementia can go about their daily activities, have a voice, make decisions, and contribute to community life for as long as possible with understanding, respect, and support from their care partners and other community members.
- People with dementia can live safely and be as independent as possible in settings that promote physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual wellness.
- People with dementia-like symptoms can receive an accurate and timely assessment and diagnosis followed by optimal treatment, support, and care.
- People with dementia and their families, friends, and care partners have easy access to supportive options, information, and resources, such as education on disease process, self-care, and providing care.
- Resources and support are available and accessible to all people regardless of where they live, their cultural background, or their economic status.

